

REMARKS

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 7-8, 12 and 15-16 as anticipated by Watanabe et al. (U.S. Patent 6,002,433 herein after "Watanabe"). Applicant traverses this rejection.

Independent Claim 1

We submit that Watanabe does not teach or suggest an image signal processor for processing a plurality of image signals associated with each of a plurality of screens comprising a deficiency determining circuit ... for determining a deficient pixel according to continuity of the deficient pixel candidate ...over the plurality of screens, as recited in amended claim 1.

Rather, Watanabe teaches 1) extracting a possibly defective pixel by comparing data of one image plane with a first threshold value; 2) accumulating a value of the possibly defective pixel by a predetermined number of exposure times; and 3) detecting a defective pixel by comparing the accumulated value of the possibly defective pixels with a second threshold value (see for example claim 2 of Watanabe). Nowhere does Watanabe disclose that he performs such steps over a plurality of screens as required by independent claim 1.

Independent Claim 12

We submit that Watanabe does not teach or suggest a method of detecting a deficient pixel in a plurality of pixels associated with each of a plurality of screens, comprising the steps of detecting a deficient pixel candidate by comparing a signal of a target pixel in one of the plurality of screens with a threshold value set in accordance with signals of a plurality of peripheral pixels adjacent to the target pixel, ... recomparing a signal of a target pixel in another of the plurality of screens which corresponds to the position stored in a position storing step with the threshold value, ...repeating the recomparing step and the comparison result storing step a predetermined number of times over the plurality of screens, as recited in amended claim 12. As discussed above, Watanabe only discloses detecting deficient pixel candidates on single image planes.

Independent Claim 16

We submit that Watanabe does not teach or suggest a method of detecting a deficient pixel in a plurality of pixels associated with each of a plurality of screens, comprising the steps of detecting a first deficient pixel candidate by comparing a signal of a target pixel in one of the plurality of screens with a threshold value set in accordance with signals of a plurality of peripheral pixels adjacent to the target pixel, ...detecting a second deficient pixel candidate by comparing a signal of a target pixel in another of the plurality of screens with the threshold value, ...repeating the second-deficient-pixel-candidate detecting step, a coincidence determining step and the updating step by a predetermined number of times over the plurality of screens, as recited in amended claim 16. As discussed above, Watanabe only discloses detecting deficient pixel candidates on single image planes.

We further submit that because claims 2-11 depend from independent claim 1; claims 13-15 depend from independent claim 12; and claims 17-18 depend from independent claim 16, these dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons that claims 1, 12, and 16 are patentable.

For the reasons discussed above, we believe that the inventions recited in claims 1-18 distinguishes over Watanabe.

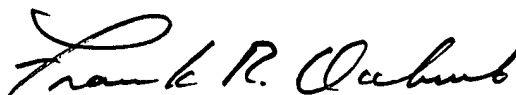
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Enclosed is a Petition for Two Month Extension of Time along with a check for \$420.00.00 for the required fee. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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